Hermeticism [addendum] Encyclopedia Article

Hermeticism [addendum]

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Hermeticism also flourished in the Jewish and Islamic world. Although only a fragment of the Greek *Corpus Hermeticum* has been discovered in Arabic, there are numerous texts in Arabic and Hebrew that are attributed to the Greek god Hermes, purporting to provide ancient wisdom. Hermes was identified respectively with Idris; a mysterious prophet mentioned in the Qur'an) and Enoch (the grandfather of Noah) in the Jewish Bible. The routes by which this Hermes arrived in Arabic texts appear to be as much via Persia as directly from Greek sources, and Haran (ancient Carrhae) in northern Mesopotamia, as a cultural melting point and the home of the Sabaeans, who worshipped the planets, appears to have played a central role. Several interrelated cosmological texts that give instructions on the invocation of planetary spirits to empower talismans purport to be the wisdom of Hermes as conveyed by Aristotle, while the earliest doctrines and practices in alchemy, shoulder-blade divination, and several aspects of astrology (e.g., lunar mansions, Egyptian decans, and astrological lots) are attributed to him, sometimes in the company of Apollonius of Tyana (first century CE), and the legendary Agathodaimon, Asclepius, and Toz Graecus. These technical works were translated into Latin, Greek, and Hebrew and formed the basis of medieval Hermeticism.

See Also

Aristotle; Islamic Philosophy; Jewish Philosophy; Medieval Philosophy.

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